



February 28, 2023
Emily McEvoy
Political Organizer, NBRJC

Dear Representative Luxenberg, Senator Moore, and members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Emily McEvoy. I am a resident of Middletown and a Board Member and Political Organizer with the New Britain Racial Justice Coalition (NBRJC). The NBRJC is a grassroots organization based in New Britain, Connecticut. Our membership is composed of roughly 75 working-class people from the greater New Britain area who want to organize for racial and economic justice, and do so through mutual aid, political education, and community action.

I am testifying in support of a rent cap and in support of SB 4, with changes to better protect tenants.

As an organization, the NBRJC works to both combat unaffordable housing developments in the City that drive up rent for all residents, and to support unhoused members of the community at times and places where our traditional public and private sector services leave gaps. With one of 2,066 evictions filed from the start of 2020 today, the crisis of affordable housing has been hitting the city we work in harder than its neighbors. Unstable housing keeps our community dysregulated and, when youth face housing instability, they are more likely to have thought and attention problems in school.¹ Housing justice and stability would be an investment in our future.

Approximately 52% of CT renters are already cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their gross monthly income on rent. Black communities in CT and those with fixed incomes (like seniors and people with disabilities) are the most affected. As wages have **not** kept pace with the spike in rent, rent caps should be a baseline response to our economic reality to keep people's quality of life intact.

Myself and the NBRJC strongly support a rent cap, and SB 4 would be stronger with the following changes:

- **The cap should be lower—I suggest 2.5 or 3%.** This tracks pre-pandemic average rent increases and would be affordable and predictable to tenants.
- **It should cover apartments in between tenants** so landlords can't push out tenants to increase the rent.
- **It should expand good cause eviction protections** to cover all tenants so they have greater stability in their homes.

Thank you.

Emily McEvoy
Political Organizer, NBRJC

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8442946/>